

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 USUN N 01999 01 OF 03 182216Z
ACTION IO-14

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NEA-11 EB-08 HEW-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 OES-07
AGRE-00 COME-00 OIC-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 01999

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TAGS: AORG, UNICEF
SUBJECT: UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

1. SUMMARY: ANNUAL UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
OPENED MAY 15 IN NEW YORK WITH REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT
FROM ALL BUT GUINEA OF 30 MEMBER NATIONS. INITIAL DAY
PLENARY INCLUDED OPENING REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR LABOUISSSE, AND INTERVENTIONS BY U.S., SWEDEN,
UK, NORWAY, SWITZERLAND, AND FRANCE. MAJOR ISSUE IS
PROPOSED GOAL OF 20 PERCENT ANNUAL INCREASE IN CONTRI-
BUTIONS 1980-84 WHICH U.S. AND SWEDEN GENERALLY SUPPORT
BUT WHICH SEVERAL MAJOR DONORS QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

2. EXECUTIVE BOARD CHAIRMAN OYONO (CAMEROON) OPENED
THE MEETING WITH APPEAL FOR MORE ATTENTION TO NEEDS OF
CHILDREN ON THE EVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE
CHILD (IYC). HE REVIEWED "FAILURE OF CIEC" AND "BLEAK"
SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN LDC'S, DESPITE ONE-THIRD
LDC GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES ON SOCIAL SECTOR. ACKNOW-
LEDGED SOME "REGRETTABLE ERRORS" IN USE OF EXTERNAL
ASSISTANCE AND URGED HARMONIOUS ECONOMIC GROWTH WITHIN
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PAGE 02 USUN N 01999 01 OF 03 182216Z

FRAMEWORK OF NIEO. CONTRASTED 1975 ARMS EXPENDITURES
OF \$350 BILLION TO "STAGNANT" OR DECLINING PROPORTION
OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE TO LDC'S, WHICH HE CITED AS 0.33
PERCENT OF GNP FOR DAC COUNTRIES AND 0.03 PERCENT FOR
SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

3. UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HENRY R. LABOUISSSE (U.S.)

STRUCK THEME OF PREPARING UNICEF FOR EXPANDED PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES IN NEAR AND MEDIUM TERMS AND RE-AFFIRMED FOCUS ON LEAST DEVELOPED AND OTHER LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES. HE PROPOSED A 20 PERCENT ANNUAL AVERAGE INCREASE IN UNICEF REVENUES IN 1980-84 INSTEAD OF THE 15 PERCENT AVERAGE INCREASE FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS AS FOLLOW UP TO IYC, PROJECTING A \$500 MILLION PROGRAM BY 1984 (\$350 MILLION IN 1979 PRICES). 1977 INCREASE OVER 1976 WAS 21 PERCENT. LABOUISSSE STATED THIS WELL WITHIN DONORS' CAPACITIES, CITING THAT ODA ONLY 0.33 PERCENT OF GNP FOR DAC MEMBERS AND EVEN "LOWER" PERCENTAGE FOR CENTRALLY-PLANNED ECONOMIES; OIL EXPORTERS CONTRIBUTIONS HIGHER IN GNP PERCENTAGE BUT NOT ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENT. FLEXIBILITY REQUESTED AS FOLLOWS: (A) MORE HELP TO LOWER RANGE E.G. INDIA, PAKISTAN IN "MIDDLE INCOME" COUNTRY CATEGORY (GROUP II) WHICH NOW RECEIVE ONE-FIFTH THE HELP PROVIDED PER CHILD INHABITANT IN GROUP RECEIVING TOP FUNDING PRIORITY (GROUP I - LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES); (B) ALLOWING USE OF GENERAL RESOURCES FOR SELECTED "NOTED" PROJECTS, IF SPECIAL FUNDING NOT FORTHCOMING; (C) ALLOWING RECURRENT COST PAYMENTS FOR MORE THAN 5 YEARS, IF NECESSARY. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF LABOUISSSE'S REPORT WERE GREAT EXPECTATIONS FOR IYC; NEW NUTRITION INITIATIVES UNDER ACC SUBCOMMITTEE LEADERSHIP; APPEAL FOR HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATION AT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 USUN N 01999 01 OF 03 182216Z

ALMA ATA (USSR) PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER; EXPRESSED HIS CONVICTION THAT TIME RIPE FOR EXCEPTIONAL COLLECTIVE EFFORT TO IMPROVE WELL BEING OF CHILDREN BEFORE YEAR 2000.

4. FRENCH DELEGATE (MANDE) STRESSED UNICEF'S UNIQUE MANDATE IN UN SYSTEM FOR AN AGE GROUP RATHER THAN A PARTICULAR SECTOR. PRAISED DIRECTOR'S FORWARD-LOOKING APPROACH, BUT NON-COMMITTAL ON PROPOSED 20 PERCENT REVENUE INCREASE. AGREED TO REQUEST FOR FLEXIBILITY AND HOPED MEDIUM-TERM PLAN WOULD PROVIDE BOARD WITH MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING ALSO SOME DETAILED REPORTING ON A FEW PROJECTS IN EACH REGION; PRAISED EMPHASIS ON PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, INCLUDING NUTRITION, BUT IN REFERENCE TO APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES, CAUTIONED THAT UNICEF COULD NOT BE "FAIRY GODMOTHER" TO THE WORLD AND MUST DRAW LIMITS SOMEWHERE.

5. UK (THOM) STRUCK GENERALLY CAUTIOUS NOTE, STRESSING DIFFICULTIES OF IMPLEMENTING STEADILY RISING PROGRAM LEVEL; NEED FOR GENERAL ECONOMIC GROWTH TO SUSTAIN SOCIAL SECTOR SERVICES; AND STATING UK COULD NOT COMMIT

ITSELF TO 20 PERCENT INCREASE IN ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH HE FELT UNREALISTIC. SUPPORTED FLEXIBILITY REQUESTED, BUT APPROVED RECURRENT COST PAYMENTS OVER 5 YEARS ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ON UNICEF INVOLVEMENT IN APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY, AND STRESSED UNICEF MAY BE SETTING SIGHTS TOO HIGH IN LIGHT OF DIFFICULT TASK OF IMPLEMENTING NUMEROUS SMALL BASIC NEEDS-TYPE PROJECTS.

6. AFTERNOON SESSION BEGAN WITH INTERVENTION BY USSR DEL (DANILOV) WHO DECRIED THE ARMS RACE WITH STATEMENT THAT EQUIVALENT OF ONE YEAR'S FUNDING FOR UNICEF EXPENDED IN ONE HOUR ON ARMAMENT. DEL EMPHASIZED THE

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PAGE 01 USUN N 01999 02 OF 03 182217Z
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NEA-11 EB-08 HEW-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 OES-07
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R 172004Z MAY 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1414
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 01999

IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CONFERENCE IN ALMA ATA (SEPT. 1978) WHEN SOVIET PLAN VISITS FOR DELEGATES TO REGIONS IN USSR WHICH WERE IN LDC STATUS A FEW DECADES AGO BUT NOW HAVE MODEL HEALTH CARE. DEL APPEARED DEFENSIVE ABOUT EARLIER CRITICISM BY CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LIMITED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIALIST COUNTRIES; EMPHASIZED USSR'S \$15 MILLION ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION TO WHO AS WELL AS BILATERAL ASSISTANCE. DEL MADE REFERENCE TO UNPOPULAR FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IN INDIA AND ADVISED CAUTION IN SUCH PROJECTS. DEL STATED IMPROVEMENT IN NON-CONVERTIBLE CURRENCY SITUATION THROUGH MORE USE BY UNICEF FOR PROCUREMENT IN SOVIET UNION.

7. SWISS DEL (CONZELT) MADE GENERALLY FAVORABLE COM-

MENTS ABOUT UNICEF BUT CRITICIZED THE PROJECTED 20 PERCENT ANNUAL INCREASES AS INFLEXIBLE AND PERHAPS UNREALISTIC. DEL EMPHASIZED NEED FOR EXCELLENCE RATHER THAN QUANTITY AND ALSO NEED TO RETAIN INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER OF UNICEF. DEL APPEALED TO BOARD MEMBERS TO SUPPORT THEIR REQUEST FOR PAPER TO BE PREPARED FOR 1979 SESSION WHICH WOULD DELINEATE SPECIAL ACCOMPLISH- UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 USUN N 01999 02 OF 03 182217Z

MENTS OF UNICEF. DEL REINFORCED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION APPROACH WITH UTILIZATION OF LOCAL RESOURCES AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE.

8. IN MAJOR INTERVENTION SWEDISH DEL (MICHANEK) STATED THAT PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTATION ARE LESS FINANCIAL AND MORE ORGANIZATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL AND THAT PLANS ARE NEEDED TO REACH TARGETS OF SUBSTANCE. UN SHOULD SUPPLY DATA, AND UNICEF SHOULD DETERMINE ITS PARTICULAR ROLE INWORKING WITH OTHER AGENICES. UNICEF NEEDS TO TRAIN NATIONAL STAFF AND ENCOURAGE SELF-HELP PROJECTS. IN REGARD TO THE 20 PERCENT ANNUAL INCREASES, DEL CITED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM COUNTRIES THAT HAD EXCEEDED THIS RATE AND ALSO MENTIONED CONTRIBUTION OF THE U.S. HE STATED THAT OTHER COUNTRIES WHOSE PAST CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE BEEN MODEST MUST INCREASE THEM NOW.

9. DEL FROM NORWAY (BOG) ENDORSED THE BASIC NEEDS AND BASIC SERVICES APPROACH ADKNOWLEDGING THAT SOME NATIONS CONTINUE TO HAVE RESERVATIONS IN THAT REGARD. HE ENDORSED 20 PERCENT INCREASE BUT NOTED IT MAY BE OVER-OPTIMISTIC, EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE LOW PERCENT OF ASSISTANCE GOING INTO NUTRITION PROJECTS, AND SUGGESTED MORE ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO THE AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. DEL STATED UNICEF COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES IS GOOD WITH A UNICEF/ UNDP/UNFPA AGREEMENT TO BE ISSUED SOON.

10. U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAMES P. GRANT OPENED WITH TRIBUTE TO PROMINENT UNICEF SUPPORTERS WHO DIED SINCE LAST MEETING AND WHO HAD BEEN PRAISED BY LABOUISSSE -- ROBERT DEBRE (FRANCE), MARTHA ELIOT (U.S.), AND UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 USUN N 01999 02 OF 03 182217Z

BARCIC (YUGOSLAVIA). IN INTERVENTION U.S. REPRESENTATIVE:

-- COMPLIMENTED UNICEF FOR ITS CONTINUED GOOD WORK.
-- ASSURED US FULLEST SUPPORT FOR IYC AND REPORTED
MRS. JEAN YOUNG NAMED AS CHAIRPERSON OF U.S. NATIONAL
COMMISSION.
-- QUOTED PRESIDENT'S MAY 2 STATEMENT ON WORLD HEALTH
PROBLEMS AND U.S. DEDICATION TO MEETING, NOTED ADMIN-
ISTRATION REQUEST FOR \$35 MILLION FOR UNICEF FOR 1979.
-- CALLED FOR MOBILIZING SUPPORT FOR IYC SO THAT YEAR
WOULD EFFECTIVELY ADVOCATE CONCERN FOR CHILDREN'S NEEDS
AND GAIN SUPPORT BOTH AT GRASS ROOTS AND GOVERNMENT
LEVELS.
-- SUPPORTED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CALL FOR INCREASED
RESOURCES AT A HIGHER RATE THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS TO
PROVIDE FOR INTENSIFICATION AND EXPANSION OF UNICEF
ACTIVITIES AFTER THE IYC.
-- RECOMMENDED IYC BE USED TO ADVANCE SYSTEMATIC LONG-
TERM PLANNING INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF FIXING OF GOALS
AND CARRYING PLANNING TO THE YEAR 2000.
-- CITED RECENT STATEMENT BY HIRC IN SECTION 102,
H.R. 12222 ENCOURAGING PRESIDENT TO EXPLORE FEASIBILITY
OF WORLD EFFORT TO ELIMINATE WORST ASPECTS OF ABSOLUTE
POVERTY BY YEAR 2000.
-- ENDORSED FURTHER UNICEF WORK IN NUTRITION AND COLLABO-
RATION WITH OTHER UN AGENCIES IN THIS AND OTHER FIELDS,
SUCH AS FAMILY PLANNING.
-- SUPPORTED MEASURES PROPOSED BY UNICEF TO PROVIDE
GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH FINANCING OF PROJECTS-
-- PAID TRIBUTE TO NATIONAL COMMITTEES AND ESPECIALLY
TO PRESIDENT OF U.S. COMMITTEE, MRS. HELENKA PANTALEONI,
WHO HAS COMPLETED 25 YEARS AS PRESIDENT.
-- CONCLUDED ON UP-BEAT NOTE OF PRAISE FOR UNICEF AND
ITS RECORD.

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PAGE 04 USUN N 01999 02 OF 03 182217Z

11. CUBAN OBSERVER REFERRED TO ECONOMIC AGGRESSION IN

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PAGE 01 USUN N 01999 03 OF 03 182216Z
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R 172004Z MAY 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1415

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UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 01999

THE WORLD AND SAID FLEXIBLE APPROACH SHOULD BE USED IN ASSISTANCE TO LEAST FAVORED COUNTRIES, AS ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE RAPIDLY, AS HAPPENED WHEN SUGAR PRICES FELL RECENTLY. DEL STATED POVERTY IS RESULT OF UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN COUNTRIES AND THERE IS NEED FOR RADICAL AND PROFOUND CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. HE SUPPORTED ASSISTANCE TO THE AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS; SAID THERE WERE ALSO PALESTINIAN CHILDREN NEEDING HELP. DEL CONCLUDED BY DESCRIBING IMPROVEMENTS IN STATUS OF CUBAN CHILDREN DURING LAST TWO DECADES.

12. OBSERVER FROM HOLY SEE WAS GENERALLY COMPLIMENTARY ABOUT UNICEF'S PROGRAMS WITH SPECIAL MENTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD. OBSERVER INDICATED THAT RICH COUNTRIES MUST GIVE UP LUXURIES IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POOR COUNTRIES.

13. SESSION CONCLUDED WITH STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF NGO'S FOR UNICEF WHICH REPRESENTS 106 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THERE WERE ENTHUSIASTIC COMMENTS ABOUT THE CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN
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PAGE 02 USUN N 01999 03 OF 03 182216Z

UNICEF AND THE NGO'S AND DESCRIPTION OF MANY SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES.

14. COMMENT: AS USUAL AT UNICEF BOARD MEETINGS ATMOSPHERE CORDIAL, CONSTRUCTIVE AND NOTABLY LACKING OF NIEO CONFRONTATION RHETORIC. KEY THEMES ARE IYC ACTIVITIES; DESIRABLE CHANGES IN POLICIES TO IMPROVE PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND EXPAND ACTIVITIES IN POOR LOW INCOME COUNTRIES IMMEDIATELY ABOVE LEAST DEVELOPED GROUP I COUNTRIES; AND PROPOSED 20 PERCENT OVERALL INCREASE IN UNICEF BUDGET ANNUALLY FOR POST-IYC 1980-84 WHICH WOULD RESULT IN REAL INCREASE OF 75

PERCENT IN UNICEF BUDGET BY 1984. LATTER ISSUE
UNDERSTANDABLY PROMISES TO BE PRINCIPAL ONE OF CONTENTION
WITH SOME DEVELOPED COUNTRIES EXPRESSING RESERVATIONS
AND CAUTION AT THIS ACCELERATED RATE OF INCREASE.
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SUPPORT INCREASE. LEONARD

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